



# **EMPLOYMENT FIRST IN MARYLAND**

# BACKGROUND

- In 1985, Maryland was one of 10 states to receive a RSA-OSERS Grant to begin converting the system to Supported Employment.
- In spite of much effort, there was little actual conversion of the system, although a significant number of people entered Supported Employment.



# WHAT HAPPENED?

- While providers were encouraged to embrace Supported Employment, Regulatory and Funding practices failed to make systems change a reality.

## ROUND 2

- In 2008, under the guidance of the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN), DDA embarked upon becoming an Employment First state.
- Today, at least 23 states are members of the SELN and are working to become Employment First states.



# KEY EFFORTS IN MARYLAND

- In partnership with DORS and a variety of stakeholders, we are in the midst of changing our system to make employment the first and most preferred service option.
- It is important to understand that employment first does not mean employment only.



# WHAT ARE WE CHANGING?

- Currently, regulations are being drafted to support employment first.



# KEY THOUGHTS

- Pay for the outcomes we desire.
- Encourage employment by changing from a whole day of funding to being able to bill for a partial day.
- Provide benefits counseling to help consumers consider employment by managing and protecting their benefits.
- Require development of staff competency for job developers and job coaches.
- Encourage and promote the skills to do customized employment.



## KEY THOUGHTS (cont.)

- Partnership with DORS.
- Requiring residential providers to be partners in supporting the employment of people they serve.
- Including career planning as a funded service.
- Structuring employment and pre-employment services in line with CMS Guidance Memo of September 16, 2011.
- For individuals who are not employed, require the team to annually reconsider employment, identify any barriers to employment and address those barriers in the person's plan.



## KEY THOUGHTS (cont.)

- Requiring agencies to establish policies and procedures explaining how they support the administration's priorities regarding employment first.
- Develop a rate structure that places a priority on individual, integrated employment and the use of natural supports.
- Separate transportation from the rate and pay based on individualized actual mileage.
- Require providers to submit employment data to DDA.

# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR A NEW SUPPORTS WAIVER?

*Food for thought...*

- What outcomes should be part of a Supports Waiver in Maryland?
- Should we only include Integrated outcomes?
- Emphasis on Integrated Employment?
- How can we structure funding and regulations to support the outcomes we decide are most desirable?
- How will we help people who are employed manage their benefits?

# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR A NEW SUPPORTS WAIVER? (cont.)

- Should the waiver include services such as travel training, job development, community-based vocational assessment and services to increase independence?
- If Transitioning Youth do not choose Integrated Employment, should they go into a different waiver?